



I-77 High Occupancy/Toll (HOT) Lanes

STIP Project Nos. I-3311C, I-5405, & I-4750AA
From I-277 (Brookshire Freeway - Exit 11) to NC 150 (Exit 36)
Mecklenburg and Iredell Counties, North Carolina

PRE-HEARING OPEN HOUSE AND COMBINED PUBLIC HEARING

July 17 and July 18, 2013



*Connecting people and places safely and efficiently, with accountability and environmental sensitivity to enhance the economy,
health and well-being of North Carolina.*

Welcome to the Open House and Public Hearing for the I-77 High Occupancy/Toll (HOT) Lanes T.I.P. Projects I-3311C, I-5405 and I-4750AA. This slide presentation will last about 10 minutes.

WELCOME

**Pre-Hearing Open House &
Combined Public Hearing**

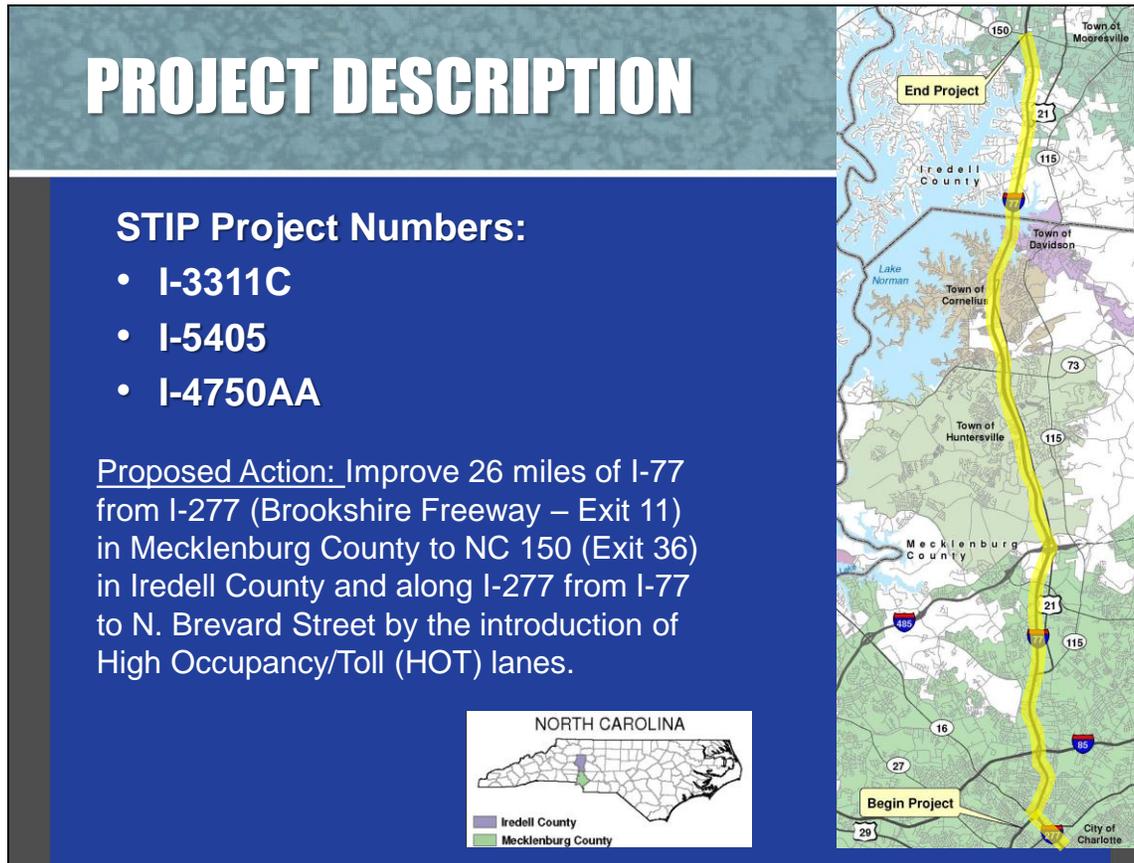
STIP Projects I-3311C, I-5405, and I-4750AA

July 17 and 18, 2013

Pre-Hearing Open House
4:30 – 6:30 p.m.
Informal, drop-in style workshop

Public Hearing
7:00 p.m.
Formal presentation

Tonight's meeting is one of two public hearings for this project to be held on July 17 and 18, 2013. The Pre-Hearing Open House, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., is an informal, drop-in style workshop for interested citizens to view project displays and discuss the project with NCDOT representatives. The Open House is followed by a Public Hearing at 7:00 p.m., during which a formal presentation of the project will be made by NCDOT about the findings of the Environmental Assessment and the next steps of the project review process.



The project is designated with three NCDOT project numbers: I-3311C, I-5405, and I-4750AA. These projects are included in the amended Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization's, or MUMPO, 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan or L.R.T.P. and the 2012-2018 State Transportation Improvement Program or STIP. The limits of the project are shown on the figure. This project extends along I-77 from I-277 (Brookshire Freeway) in Mecklenburg County to N.C. 150 (Exit 36) in Iredell County and along I-277 from I-77 to North Brevard Street and proposes the addition of High Occupancy/Toll (or HOT) lanes.

PURPOSE OF PUBLIC HEARING

- Present project and hearing map
- Obtain your input
- Answer your questions
- Inform you of the next steps in the process



Today's hearing is an important step in the North Carolina Department of Transportation's procedure for making you, the public, a part of the project development process. The purpose of this public hearing is to present the hearing maps and obtain public input on the proposed project. NCDOT staff and representatives are available here to answer your questions and discuss the next steps in the process.

NOW THAT YOU'RE HERE ...

- Be sure to sign-in at the welcome table, take a handout, and view the slide presentation
- If you want to speak at the hearing, please register on the yellow sign-in sheet
- Review project maps and speak with project representatives
- Complete comment sheet

I-77 High Occupancy/Toll (HOT) Lanes
Hickoryburg and Chapel Courts
Public Hearing, Sat. 10/23/10, 7:00 p.m.
Lincoln Heights Academy, Charlotte
Transportation Improvement Program Project Area: I-77/US 1, I-85/US 1, I-85/US 28
Charlotte, NC

REQUEST TO SPEAK SIGN-IN SHEET
Please Print Name

I wish to speak at tonight's public hearing.

| Name | Address |
|------|---------|
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Page ____ of ____

You are encouraged to participate in tonight's meeting by signing in at the welcome table, taking a handout, and viewing this slide presentation. If you would like to speak at tonight's hearing, please register on the yellow sign-in sheet available at the welcome table. As you review the project maps, several NCDOT staff and representatives are available to talk with you, explain the design to you, and answer your questions. Please remember to complete a comment sheet.

SUMMARY OF PROJECT PURPOSE & NEED

Need for project:

- I-77 is part of the national Interstate Highway System and is a critical, north-south transportation corridor for the Charlotte-metro region and beyond.
- Currently, there is heavy traffic during peak periods, resulting in congestion and delays
- Predicted growth will continue to increase delays



I-77 Northbound near LaSalle Street

Purpose of the project:

- To provide immediate travel time reliability along I-77 from Uptown Charlotte to the Lake Norman area

I-77 is part of the national Interstate Highway System and is a critical, north-south transportation corridor for the Charlotte-metro region and beyond. Within the immediate study area for this project, I-77 links the major employment center of downtown Charlotte, known locally as “Uptown”, with the rapidly growing residential communities of northern Mecklenburg and southern Iredell counties. Currently, heavy traffic occurs during peak periods within the project limits, resulting in frequent congestion and delays.

The project study area has grown faster than the financial resources available to complete long-term transportation improvements. Existing traffic congestion within the I-77 corridor results in unpredictable delays, as well as excessive travel times for commuters and travelers. Predicted growth in the northern communities of Mecklenburg County will continue to increase these delays and travel times.

The purpose of the proposed action is to provide immediate travel time reliability along I-77 from Uptown Charlotte to the Lake Norman area. To address this need, it is proposed to incorporate managed lanes (HOT lanes) with variable pricing within the project corridor.

HIGH OCCUPANCY/TOLL (HOT) LANES

What are HOT Lanes?

- HOT or managed lanes allow for free use for eligible carpoolers (three passengers or greater), transit riders, and motorcyclists.
- The number of cars using these lanes can be controlled by varying the fee to encourage free-flowing traffic in the HOT lanes at all times.
- The project will not remove any existing general purpose lanes.

High Occupancy/Toll (or HOT) lanes are managed lanes that allow free use for vehicles meeting High Occupancy Vehicle or H.O.V. requirements, which include vehicles with three or more passengers, buses, and motorcyclists. All other users can access the HOT lanes by paying a fee which will vary depending on congestion levels. To encourage free-flowing traffic in the HOT lanes at all times, even during rush hour, the number of cars using these lanes will be controlled by varying the fee. The price would be higher during peak periods when demand is greater, and lower during less congested times. This approach addresses travel delays by providing a transportation option that results in more reliable local trip times and improves overall network efficiency. **The project will not remove any existing general purpose lanes.** If a motorist does not want to pay the toll, they can still use the existing general purpose lanes at no cost.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA)

What is an EA?

I-77 High Occupancy/Toll (HOT) Lanes
From I-277 (Brookshire Freeway - Exit 11) to NC 150 (Exit 36)
Mecklenburg and Iredell Counties

Federal Aid Project No. NHS-077-(210)
WBS No. 34181.1.1
STIP Project No. I-3311C

Federal Aid Project No. NHF-077-1(2099)
WBS No. 45454.1.1
STIP Project No. I-5405

Federal Aid Project No. IMF-077-1(183)299
WBS No. 40099.1.1
STIP Project No. I-4750AA

**ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
&
NC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Approved

7/1/13
Date *Gregory J. Thorpe*
FOR Gregory J. Thorpe, PhD, Manager
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Unit
North Carolina Department of Transportation

7-1-13
Date *John F. Sullivan, III*
John F. Sullivan, III, PE, Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration

An Environmental Assessment, or E.A. is prepared to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act, or Nepa, when no significant impacts are found that would require preparation of an environmental impact statement. An Environmental Assessment includes discussions of the need for the project, the alternatives evaluated, the environmental impacts of the project alternatives, and coordination with agencies and the public.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA)

Evaluation of Project Impacts

- Human Environment
- Physical Environment
- Cultural Environment
- Natural Environment



Irwin Creek Greenway

In evaluating the impacts of the project alternatives, NCDOT considers the human environment (including social and community impacts), the physical environment (including topics such as noise, air quality, floodplains and hazardous materials), the cultural environment (including historic architectural resources and archaeological resources), and the natural environment (including soils, wildlife, and water resources). Additional information about the impacts of this project is presented in the Environmental Assessment, which is available here for review tonight.

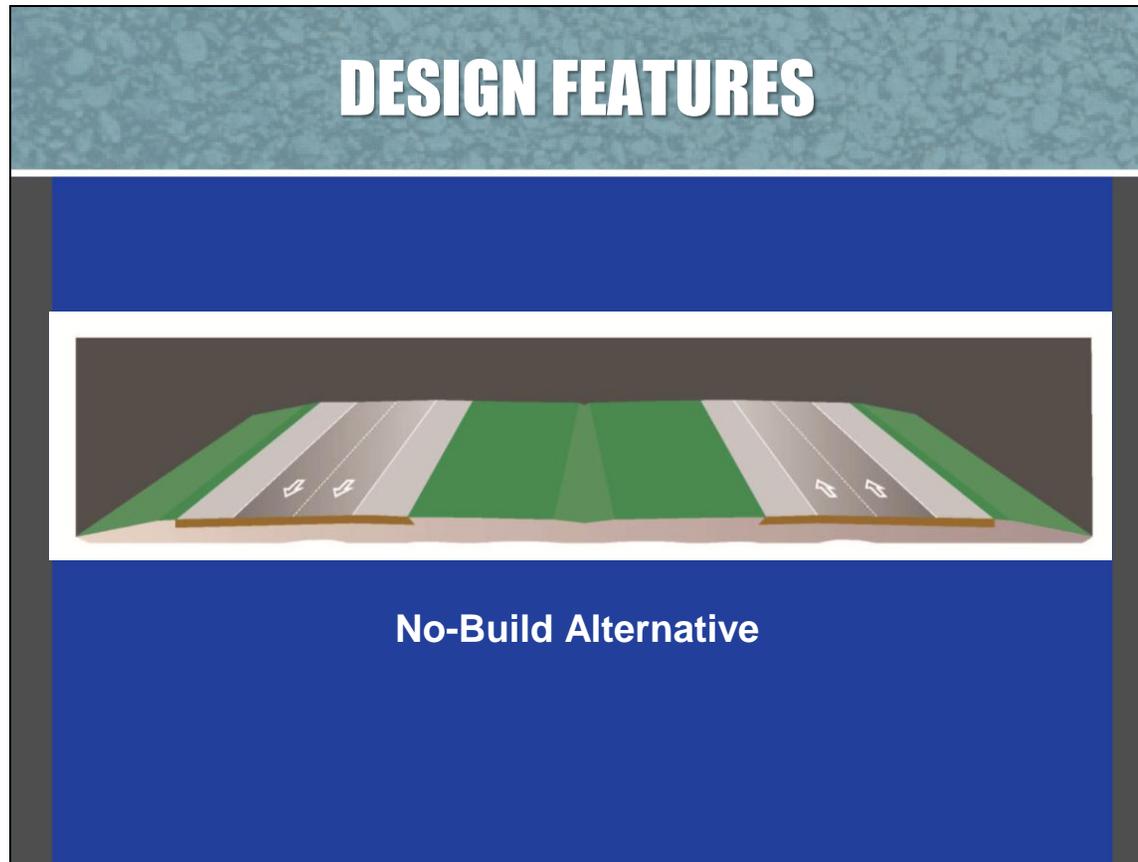
ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

- **No-Build Alternative**
- **3 Build Alternatives**
 - Difference between alternatives is in the number of HOT lanes provided along various sections of I-77
 - All Build Alternatives would convert existing HOV lanes to HOT lanes

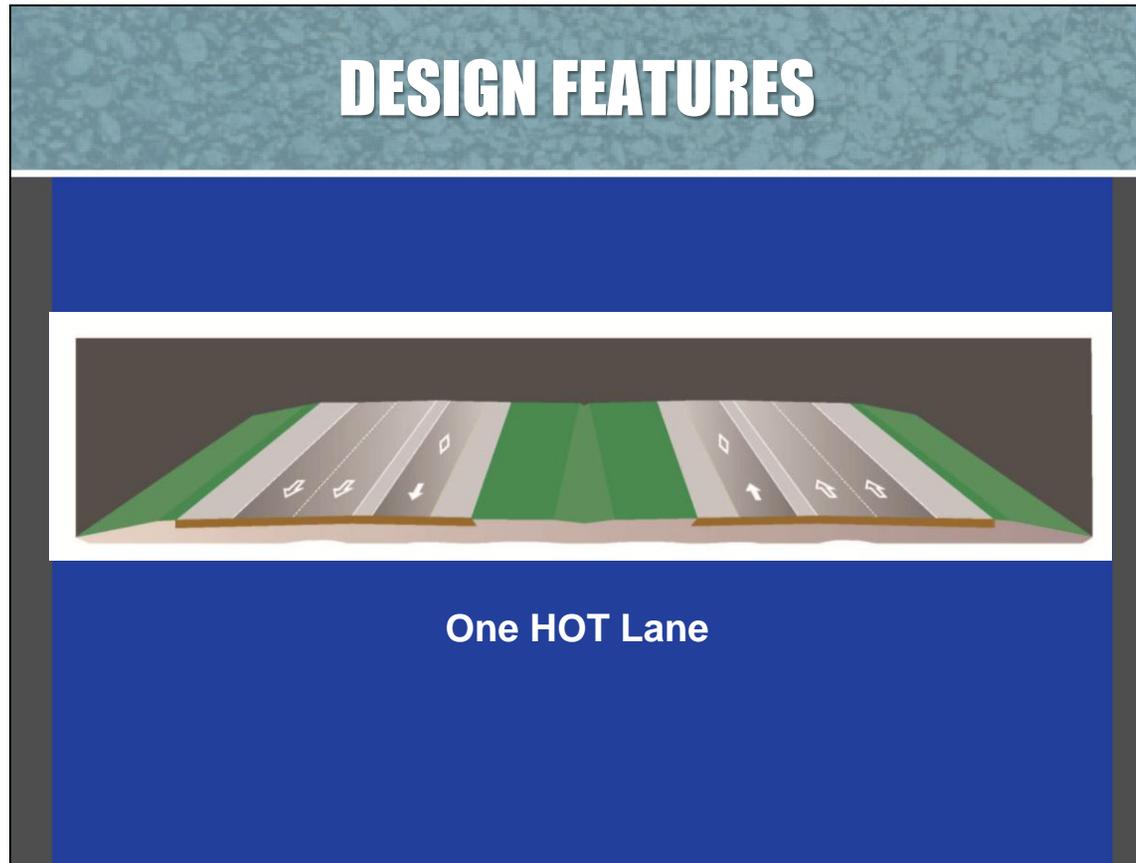
Preferred Alternative is Build Alternative 2

Alternatives studied in the Environmental Assessment include the No-Build Alternative and three Build Alternatives. The analysis of the No-Build Alternative, which represents the I-77 corridor without the proposed project, is required and serves as a benchmark against which the impacts of other alternatives can be compared. The differences between the three Build Alternatives are the number of HOT lanes provided along various sections of I-77. All Build Alternatives include the conversion of the existing H.O.V. lanes within the project limits to HOT lanes. Under all Build Alternatives, the HOT lanes would be the center lanes of I-77 with the outer lanes remaining general purpose lanes. The build alternatives also would require replacement or reconstruction of some cross-street bridges over I-77 and I-277.

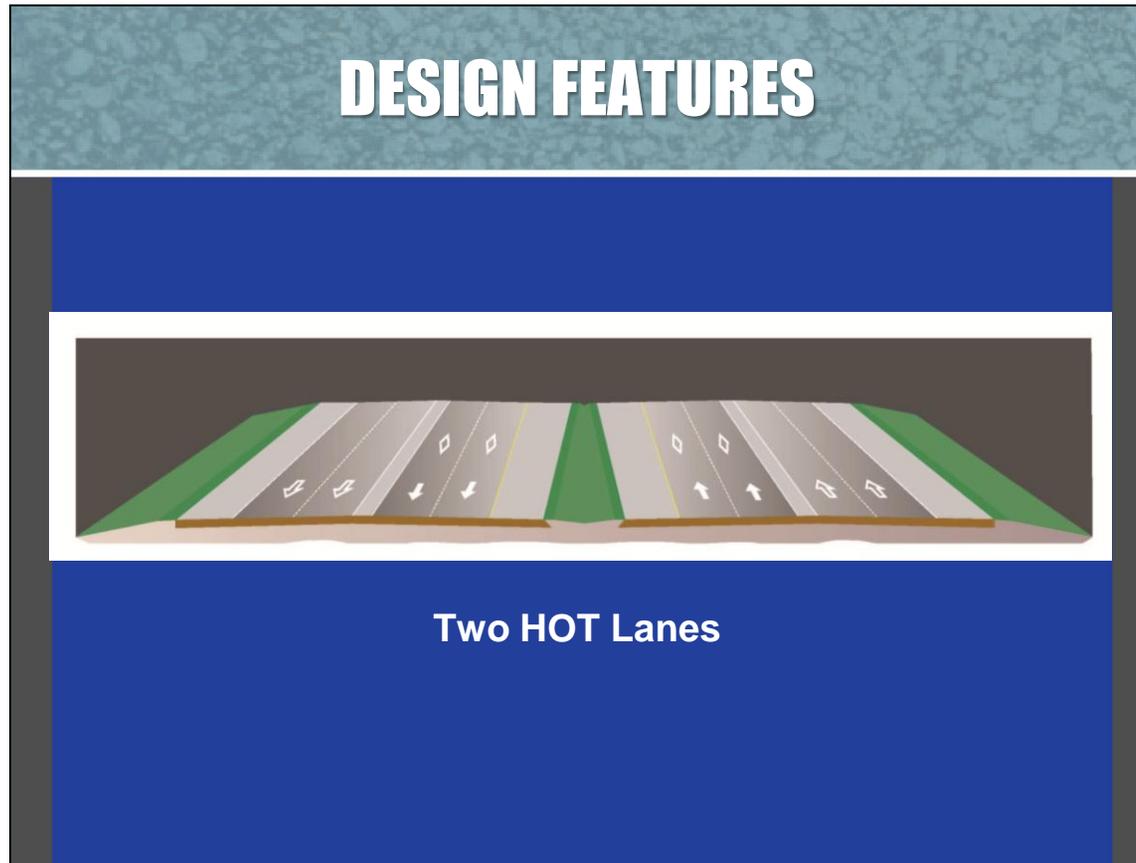
Based on information analyzed in the EA, NCDOT's Preferred Alternative is Build Alternative 2. Build Alternative 2 is preferred over Build Alternatives 1 and 3 because of the additional HOT lane capacity provided with minimal additional impact. Maps and displays of all three alternatives are available for review tonight.



This graphic represents the No-Build Alternative, which would maintain existing conditions along I-77.



This graphic represents the addition of one HOT lane in each direction. Note that the HOT lanes are added as center lanes, with the existing general purpose lanes remaining as the outer lanes. The HOT lanes are separated from the general purpose lanes with a 4-foot buffer.



This graphic represents the addition of two HOT lanes in each direction. Again, note that the HOT lanes are added as center lanes, with the existing general purpose lanes remaining as the outer lanes.

Display boards showing the typical sections for each section of the project are available for review tonight.

NEXT STEPS

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| ▪ Completed July 2013 | Environmental Assessment |
| ▪ August 2013 | *Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) |
| ▪ Fall 2014 | Construction begins |
| ▪ Late 2017 | Open to traffic |

Project schedule subject to change

* Current Assumptions call for completion of a FONSI, however this is subject to change dependent on comments received on the EA.

The Environmental Assessment for the project was signed on July 1st. After the Environmental Assessment comment period ends, F.H.W.A. and NCDOT will either 1) decide to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement, or 2) identify a Selected Alternative and prepare a Finding of No Significant Impact or FONSI. This schedule assumes a FONSI will be prepared in August but that is subject to change depending on the comments we receive. Construction is expected to begin in the Fall of 2014 with project opening to traffic in late 2017. Please note that this schedule is preliminary and subject to change.

RIGHT OF WAY STEPS

Additional right of way will be required south of I-85 under Build Alternatives 1 and 2, but not Build Alternative 3.

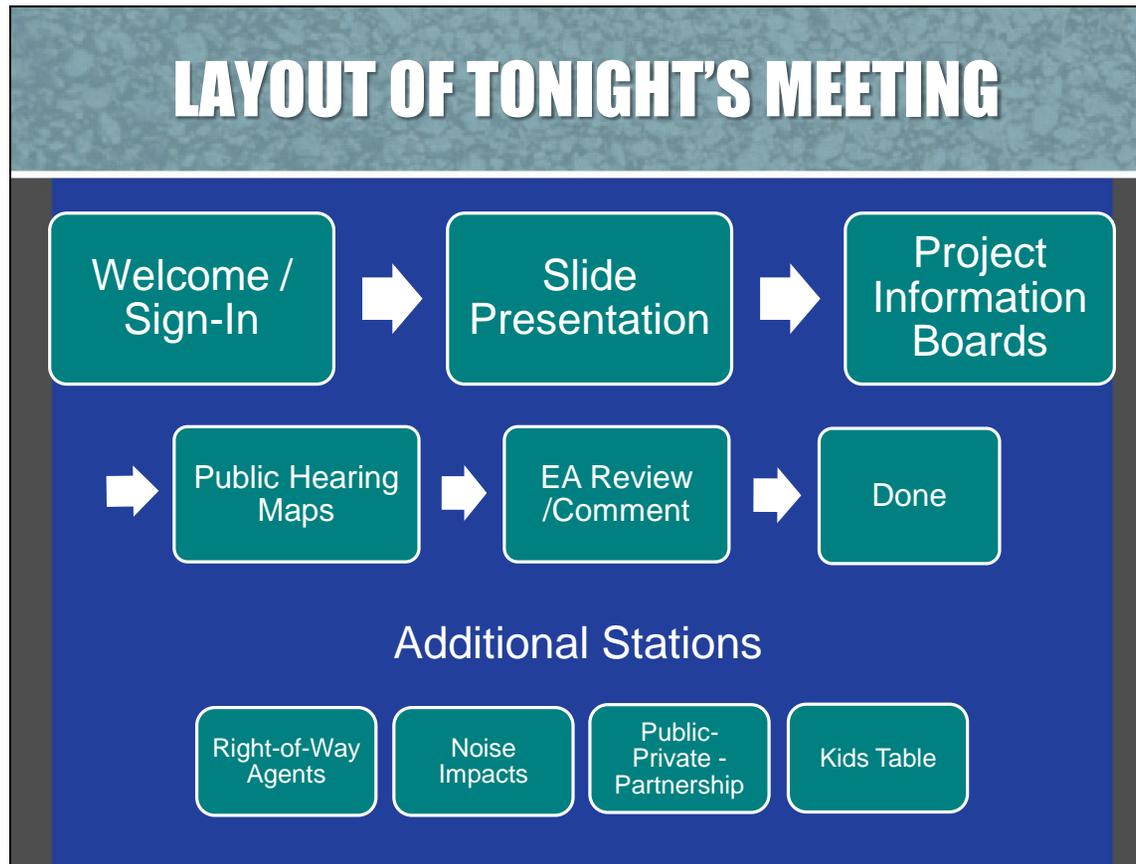
- If affected, you will be contacted by a Right of Way Agent
- Appraisal made based on current market value

After decisions are made regarding the final design, the proposed right-of-way limits will be staked in the ground. If your property is affected, you will be contacted by a right of way agent who will show you the plans, explain how the project will affect you and advise you of your rights. If permanent right of way is required, a professional appraisal of your properties' current market value at its highest and best use will be made and the right of way agent will make a written offer to you.

DOT's Responsibilities to Property Owners and Tenants

- Treat all property owners equally
- Explain fully an owner's legal rights
- Pay just compensation in exchange for property rights
- Furnish relocation advisory assistance, in accordance with federal and state regulations

During this process, NCDOT must treat all owners and tenants equally, must fully explain owner's rights, must pay just compensation in exchange for property rights, must furnish relocation advisory assistance if that is required, and must initiate legal action if a settlement cannot be reached. If you are a relocatee, that is, if your residence or business is to be acquired as part of the project, additional assistance in the form of advice and compensation is available. You will also be provided with assistance on locations of comparable housing and/or commercial establishments, moving procedures and moving aid. Moving expenses may be paid for you. Additional monetary compensation is available to help homeowners cope with mortgage increases, increased value of comparable homes, closing costs, etc. A similar program is available to assist business owners. Right of Way agents present this evening can explain this assistance in greater detail.



There are several stations that you will pass through at tonight's meeting. These include the welcome or sign-in table, slide presentation, project information boards, hearing maps, and the Environmental Assessment review and comment station. Right-of-way agents along with representatives to address questions about highway noise and project financing are also here tonight to answer your questions; a kids table with coloring pages and crayons is also set up. Please be sure to visit each station.

COMMENTS

- Two comment sheets
 - Title VI Public Involvement Form
 - Project Comment Sheet

TITLE VI PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT FORM

Completing this form is a **mandatory** activity. You are not required to provide the information requested in order to participate in this meeting.

Meeting Type: **Chartered Public Hearing** Date: **March 12, 16, 19, 2013**
 Location: **Southwest 28th Street/Chandler**
 EIP No.: **10-207-00-00000**
 Project Description: **I-77 Expresslanes**

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related authority, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) invites the transportation planning and affected community participants to assist the benefits of a submitted transportation plan under any of the Department's programs, policies, or activities, based on their race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, religion, or gender.

Completing this form helps meet our data collection and public involvement obligations under Title VI and NHTA, and will expedite the review process. Please provide the completed form to the transportation planning agency. Make sure to fill in an NCDOT office or email it to the NCDOT Office of Civil Rights, Title VI Section at 511 West Jones Street, Raleigh, NC 27603-0111.

All forms will remain on file at the NCDOT as part of the public record.

Zip Code: _____

Gender: Male Female

Age: 18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65 and older

Total Household Income: less than \$12,000 \$12,000 - \$15,000 \$15,000 - \$24,999 \$25,000 - \$34,999 \$35,000 - \$49,999 \$50,000 - \$74,999 \$75,000 - \$99,999 \$100,000 - \$149,999 \$150,000 or greater

Have a Disability: Yes No

Race/Ethnicity: Other National Origin (if from outside the U.S.)

Black/African American Other
 White Latin American
 American Indian/Alaskan Native Pacific Islander
 Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander Hispanic/Latino
 Other (please specify) _____

How did you hear about this meeting? (check all that apply) _____

For more information regarding Title VI of this request, please contact the NCDOT Title VI Section at (919) 549-1888 or toll free at 1-800-522-0463, or by email at titlevi@ncdot.gov

Thank you for your participation.

I-77 High Occupancy/Toll (HOT) Lanes

Project No.: **10-207-00-00000** EIP No.: **10-207-00-00000**

Contact Information (Please Print)

Name: _____
 Mailing Address: _____
 (Please remember to include your zip code.)
 How did you hear about the meeting?
 Newsletter Newspaper Friend/Family Other: _____

Comments
 Your opinions about this project are important to us. Please use the space below to include your comments or questions. If you need additional room to write, please take additional comment sheets or include your own letter.

1. I-77 currently experiences congestion during the morning and evening rush hours. Do you feel adding High Occupancy/Toll lanes would help reduce congestion along I-77? Would you be willing to pay a toll to use the HOT lanes and avoid congestion? Why or why not?

2. When you think about the potential impacts of this project, please tell us how concerned you are with each of the following. Use a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being something that concerns you very much and 5 being something about which you are least concerned.

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| Potential impacts to the environment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Potential impacts to local residents | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Potential impacts to local businesses | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Emergency response time | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Safety | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Other (please explain): _____

Comments due by August 1, 2013

Please take time to fill out the Title 6 Public Involvement Form and the Comment Sheet tonight which are included in the back the handout available at the welcome table. If you prefer to fill out the comment sheet at home, please return it to the NCDOT at the address on the bottom of the form by August 1, 2013.

THANK YOU

Thank you for attending the Pre-Hearing Open House and Public Hearing for the I-77 High Occupancy/Toll Lanes project (STIP Project Nos. I-3311C, I-5405, and I-4750AA). We appreciate your interest in this project.



Thank you for attending the Open House and Combined Public Hearing for the I-77 High Occupancy/Toll Lanes project. Again, please provide your comments on the comment sheet provided with your handout. If you would like to make a verbal comment during tonight's public hearing, which will begin at 7:00 P.M., please sign up at the welcome table.

We appreciate your interest in this project. Please proceed to the next room where you can view the project maps and speak with members of the project team. This presentation will begin again in 1 minute.

**PLEASE PROCEED TO THE
MAIN AREA**

THIS PRESENTATION
WILL BEGIN AGAIN IN 1 MINUTE